Tonari ni (Next to You)

By Basso

Chapter 2

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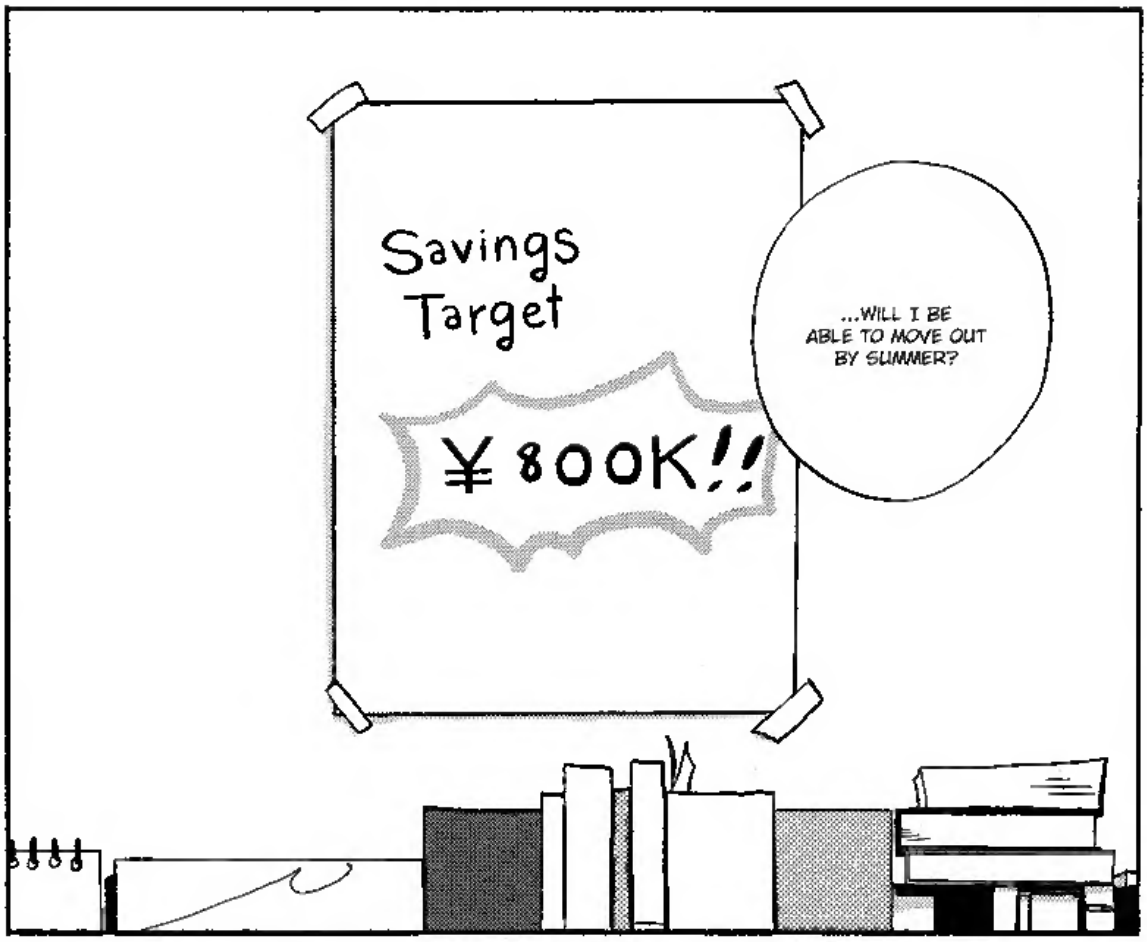
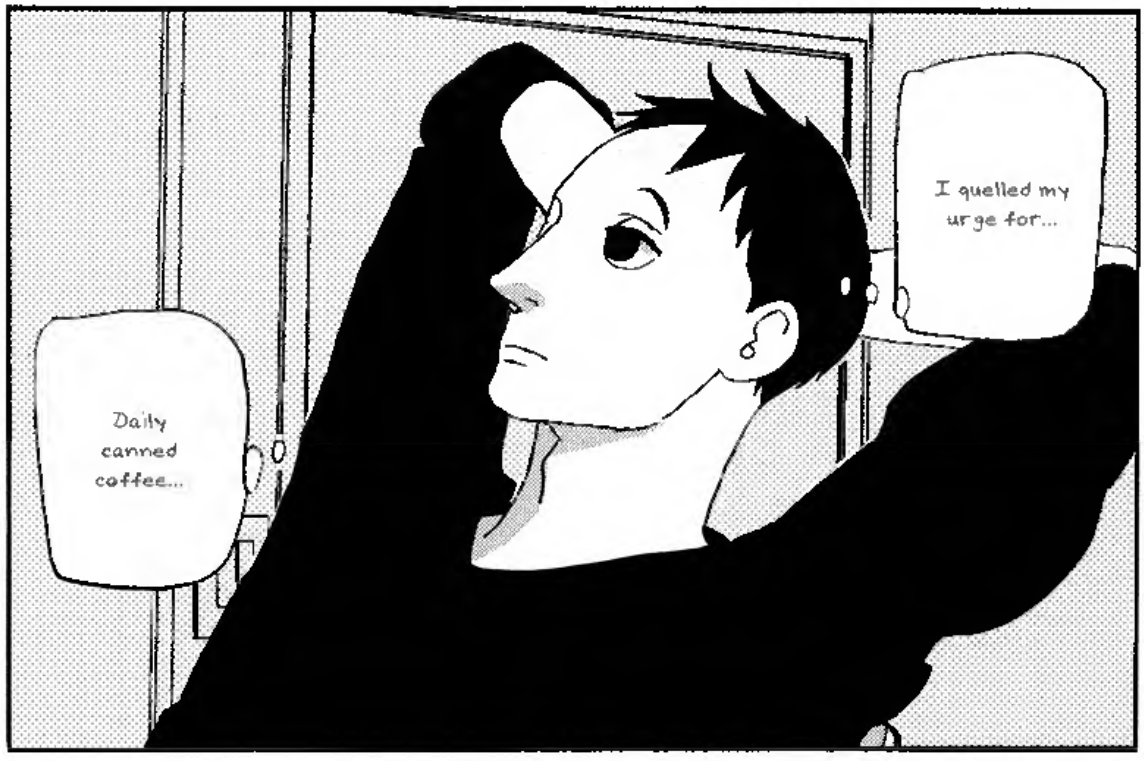
Episode 2

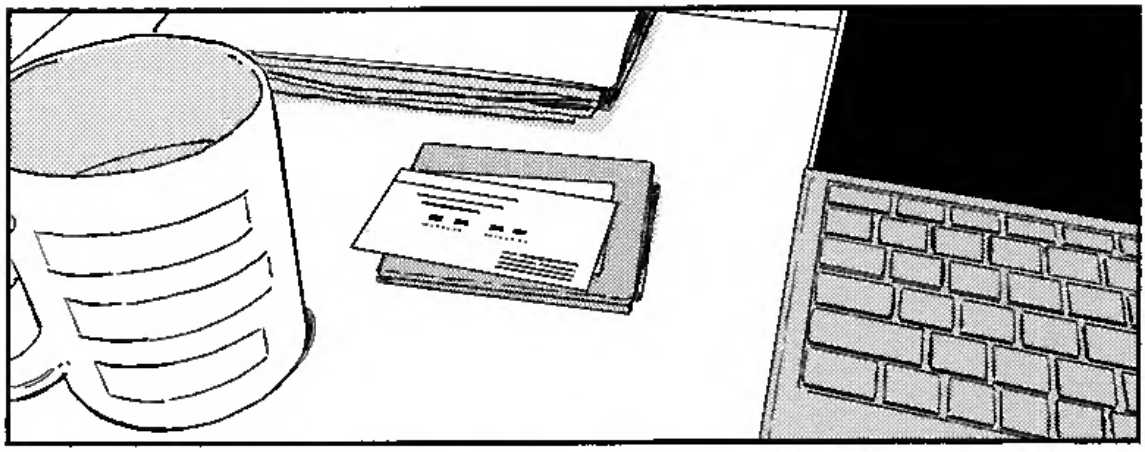
tonari ni

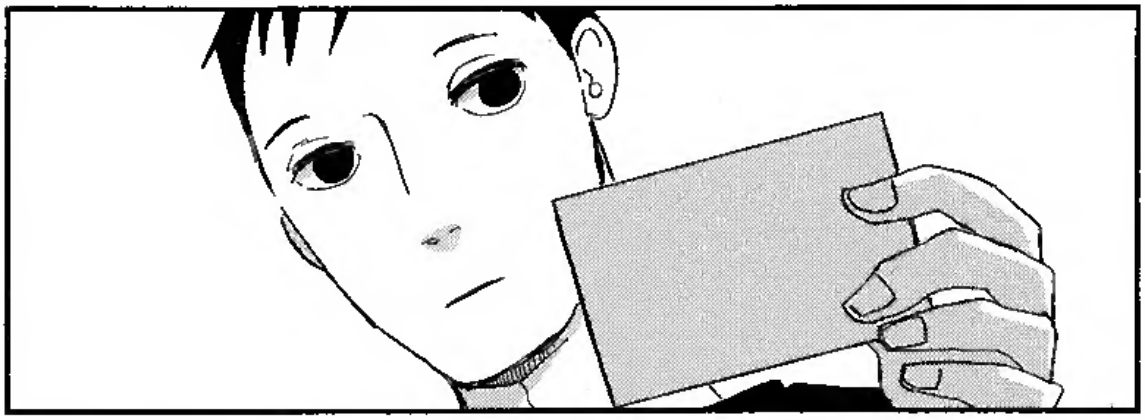

Savings Target
¥800K!!
...WILL I BE ABLE TO MOVE OUT BY SUMMER?


I quelled my urge for...
Daily canned coffee...

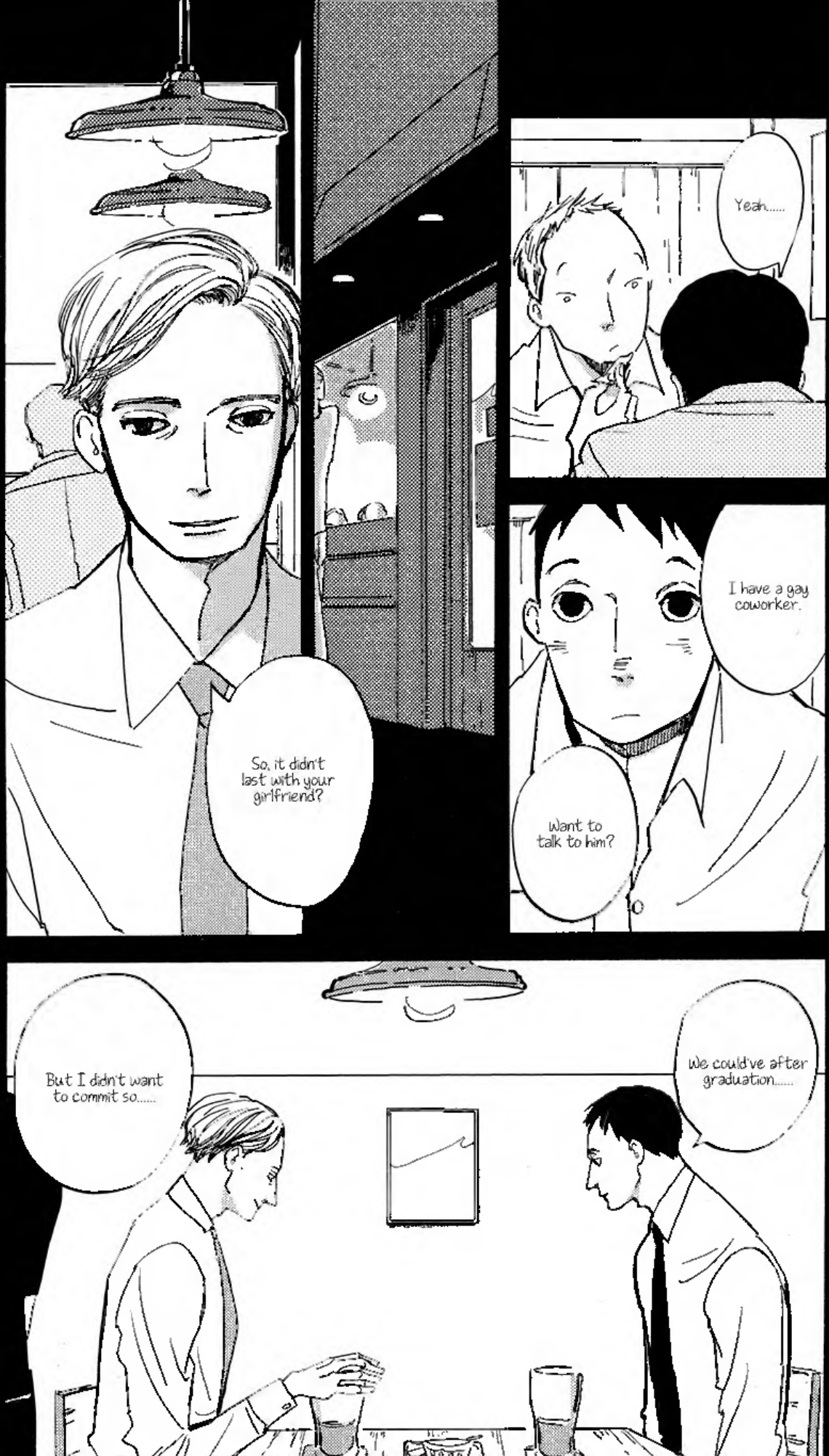
YOTO RACE COURSE
And wanting to go to Kansai...
But...
It's been two months!
I'll be going this week.

... Just which one am I getting more excited about?
...I'll do the usual.
12R
Result
6
.3
Watch until the last race,
Relax for a bit,
Then travel back,
Then get to the platform. If I do all that,
Get some rice balls,
I'll get two chances to meet him. But...
I can say with confidence that...

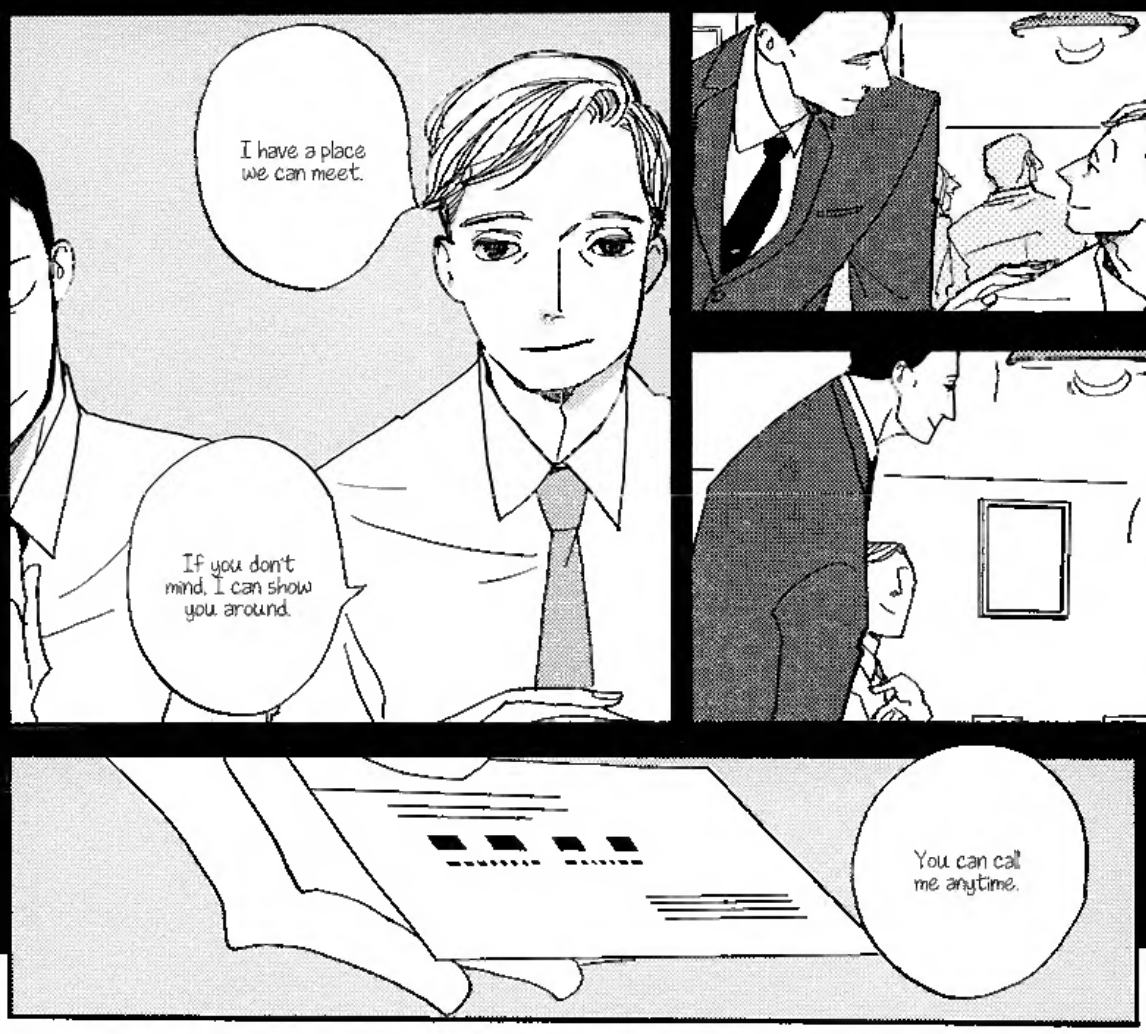




Sorry about this sorta thing...
Look, I get that I'm your only sensible option to talk about it but...
I've liked some girls, too...
But... well...
...well.
.....
I've been your confidant since we were in primary school but...
This tops it all.
I...
Think I prefer men...


So, it didn't last with your girlfriend?
Yeah.....
I have a gay coworker.
Want to talk to him?
But I didn't want to commit so.....
We could've after graduation.....

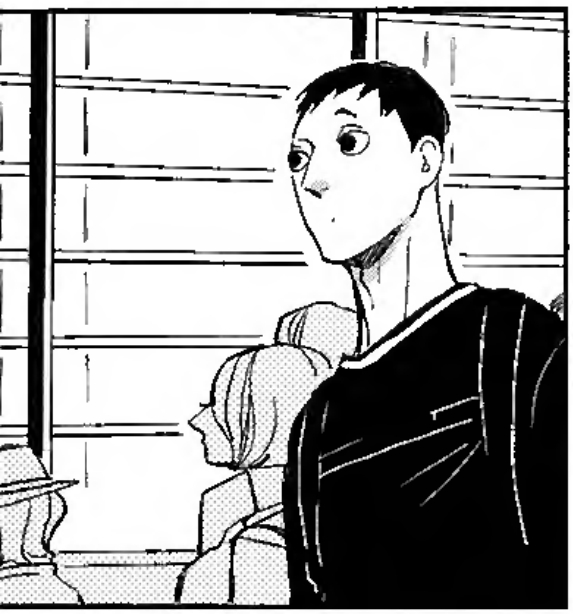
Regardless of their gender.
Maybe you're attracted to a person...
...I think that might not be it.
It's not that it must be that person.....
So it's not something like 'it must be that person'?
You haven't met the person who made you realize this?
No.
I just happened to see him.
it's more like if I get to meet him again, it would be great to see him by my side.
It's something like that.


I have a place we can meet.
If you don't mind, I can show you around.
You can call me anytime.

JR 京都駅
KYOTO STATION
Shinkansen Station (Central

近鉄京都駅
KINTETSU
KYŌTO Station

名古屋・東京方面
for Nagoya, Tōkyō
12



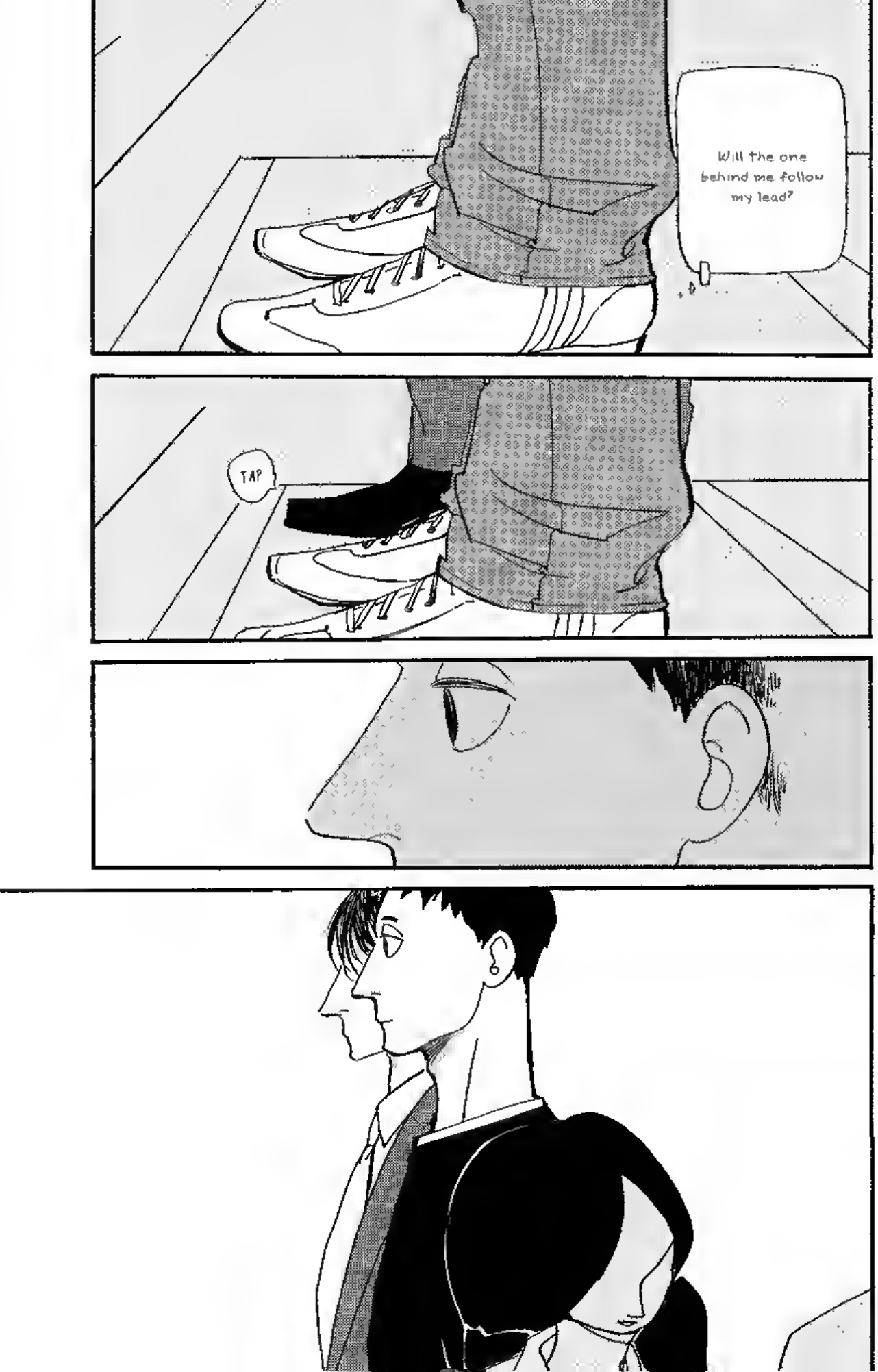
SALMON

Getting his mom's preferred oil blotting papers

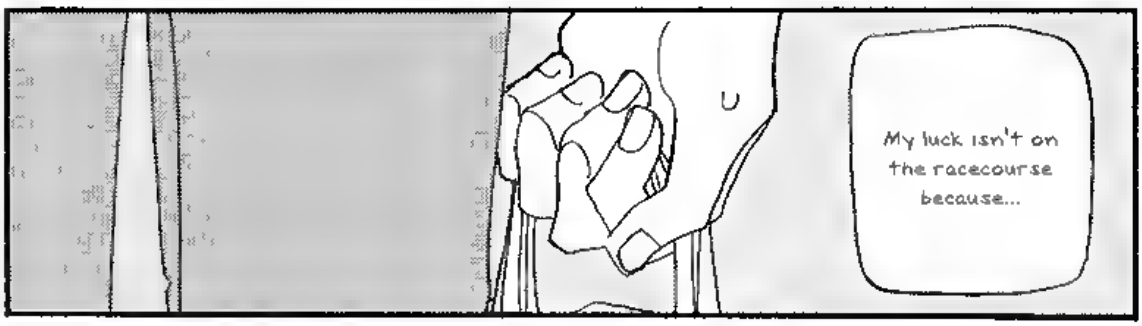
Buy yourself a meal with the extra money.
- Mom

Aahhh.
Today was a good day.
I got to take the perfect shot of my most favorite horse
It'll be the cherry on top if I meet him on this trip.

Lining sideways.


Will the one behind me follow my lead?
TAP

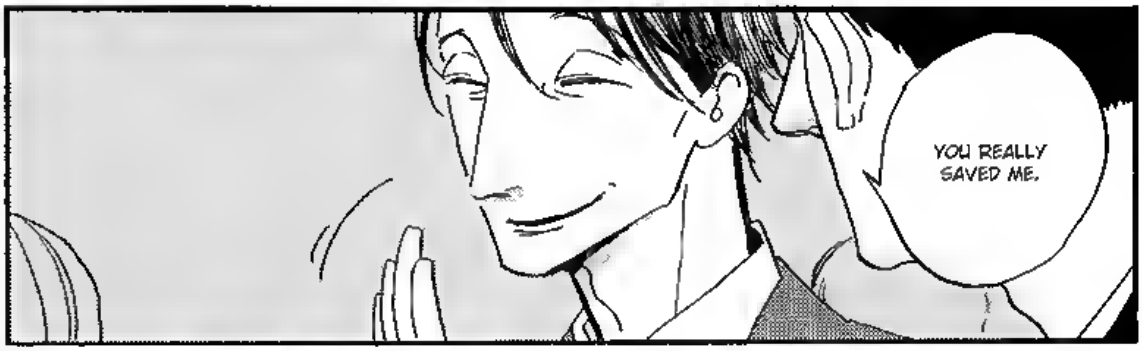
gulp

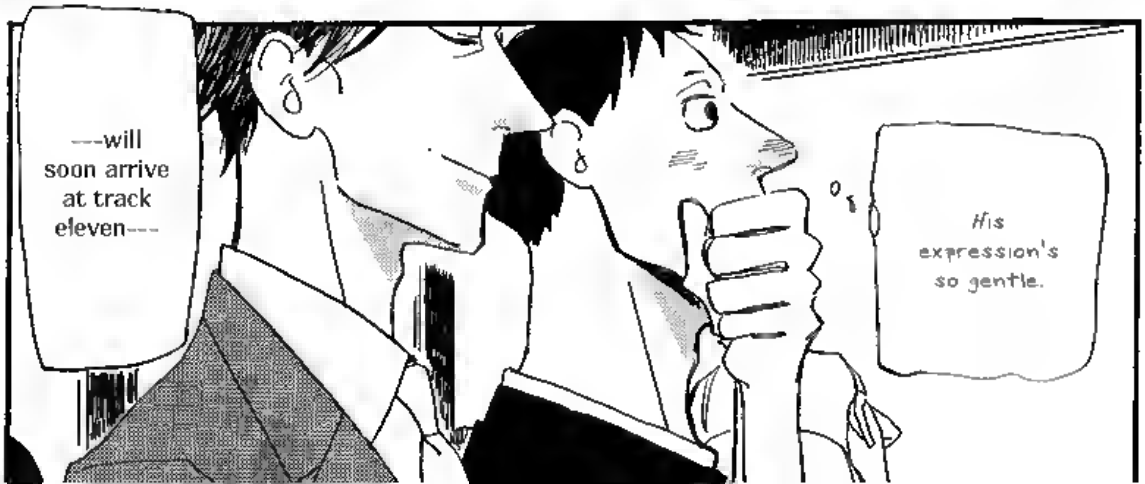

My luck isn't on the racecourse because...

It's right here

...Be cool.
Be cool.
Waaaaa-aaaah
AH!
FROM THAT TIME.
YOU'RE FROM SHIN-YOKOHAMA.
HUH?

...THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR LAST TIME.
...THE FIRST TRAIN LEAVING SHIN-OSAKA...
SAME WITH ME.
IS THIS ALSO YOUR USUAL SPOT?
IT IS.


YOU REALLY SAVED ME.


---will soon arrive at track eleven---
His expression's so gentle.

This is Kyoto.
Kyoto.
HERE?
It's pretty full, so...
Maybe he'll sit next to me—
IT'S CROWDED, HUH.

I'd talk to him but...
He'll likely sleep soon, and I'll just be in the way
THANKS.
PLEASE TAKE THIS SEAT.
I'M GETTING OFF FIRST.
YOU SURE?

THAT RICE BALL,

I SOMETIMES SEE PEOPLE EATING IT. WHERE CAN YOU BUY IT?
OH!
YOU MEAN THIS?
THERE'S A GROCERY ON THE FIRST FLOOR OF HACHIJO-GUCHI WHERE SOUVENIRS ARE SOLD.....
OH, I HAVEN'T BEEN THERE.

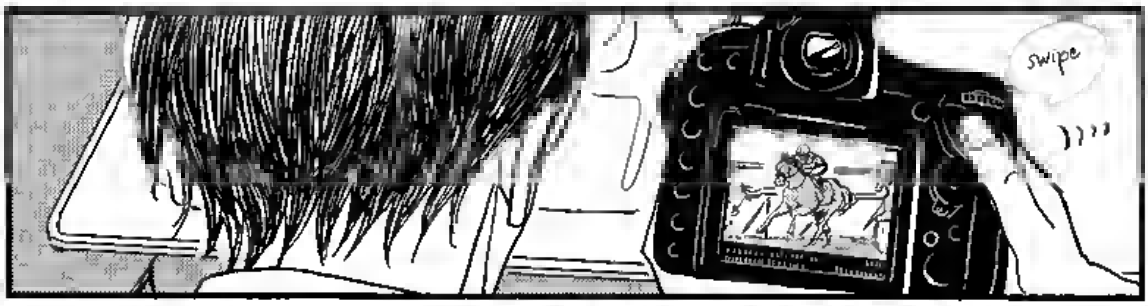
WOULD YOU LIKE SOME?
IT IS GOOD!
IT LOOKS GOOD SO...
I TAKE PHOTOS THERE...
I'LL DO THAT NEXT TIME.
HAHA!
What a friendly guy!
SO, YOU COME TO KYOTO OFTEN, HUH.
I SEE.
I'VE BEEN WORKING FOR TWO YEARS.
ARE YOU A STUDENT?
SOMETIMES ...

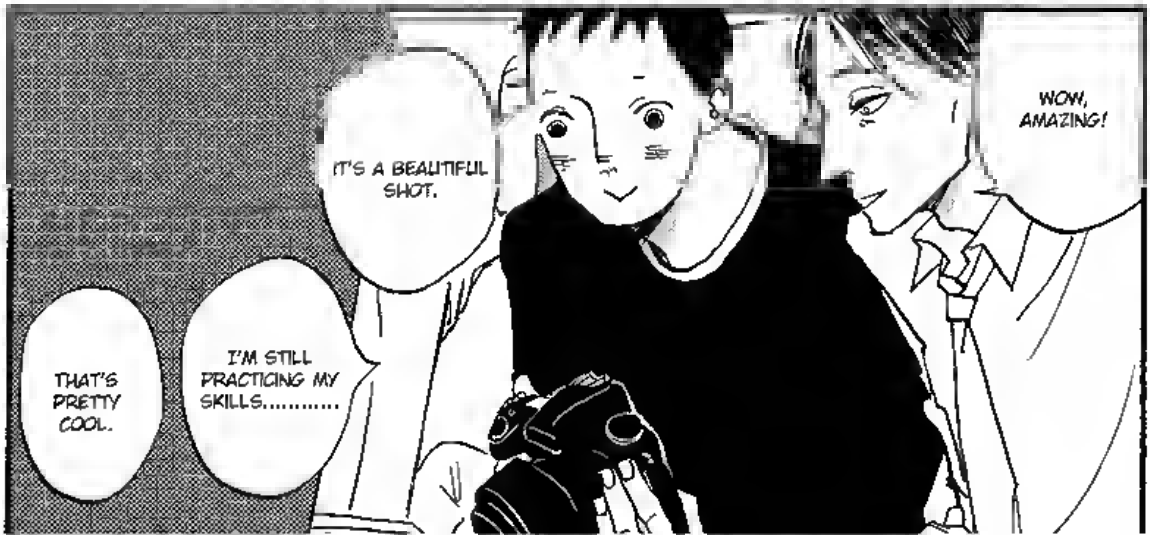
YOU HAVE GOOD TASTE
BLUUUUSH

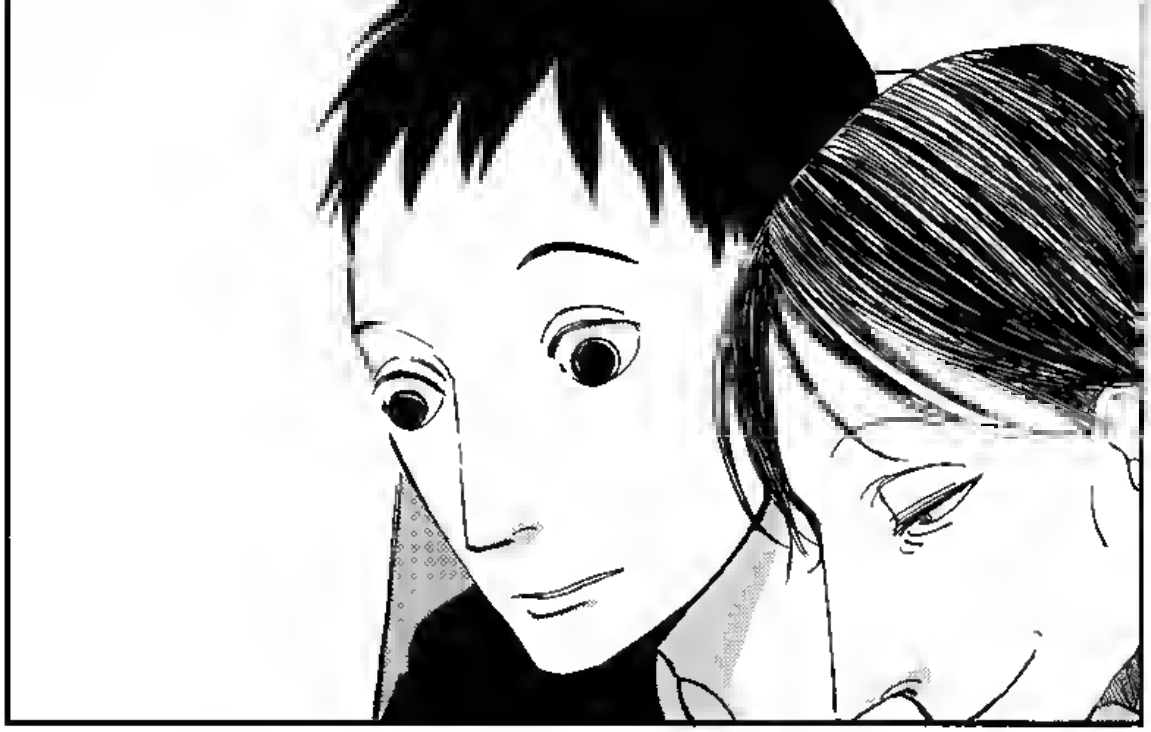
SO IT'S HORSE RACING.

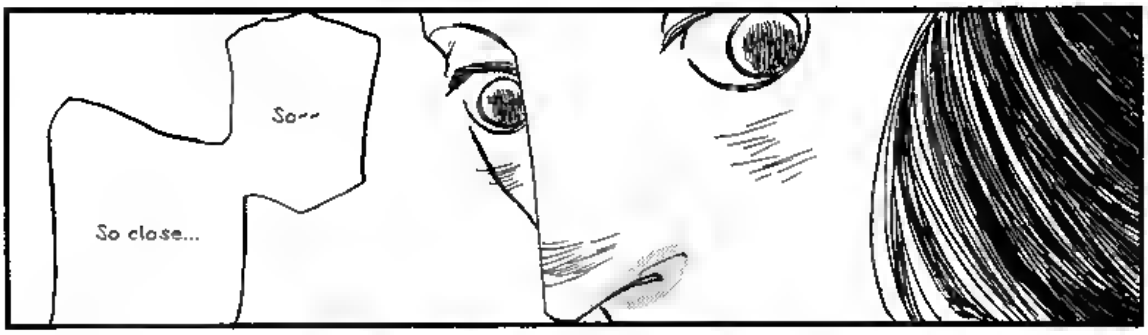
I SAVED UP MONEY TO GET IT.
AND I TAKE PICTURES OF HORSES I LIKE...

THAT'S A PRETTY NICE CAMERA


swipe


WOW, AMAZING!
IT'S A BEAUTIFUL SHOT.
I'M STILL PRACTICING MY SKILLS.....
THAT'S PRETTY COOL.




So--
So close...

Oh my goood!
He's been really, really nice to me!
WHICH ONE'S THE BEST FROM WHAT YOU TOOK TODAY?
I USUALLY FALL ASLEEP SINCE I HAVE NOTHING TO DO BUT SLEEP.
I'M NOT.
I'M SORRY.
Hah!
I'M TAKING UP YOUR TIME,
EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE EXHAUSTED FROM WORK...

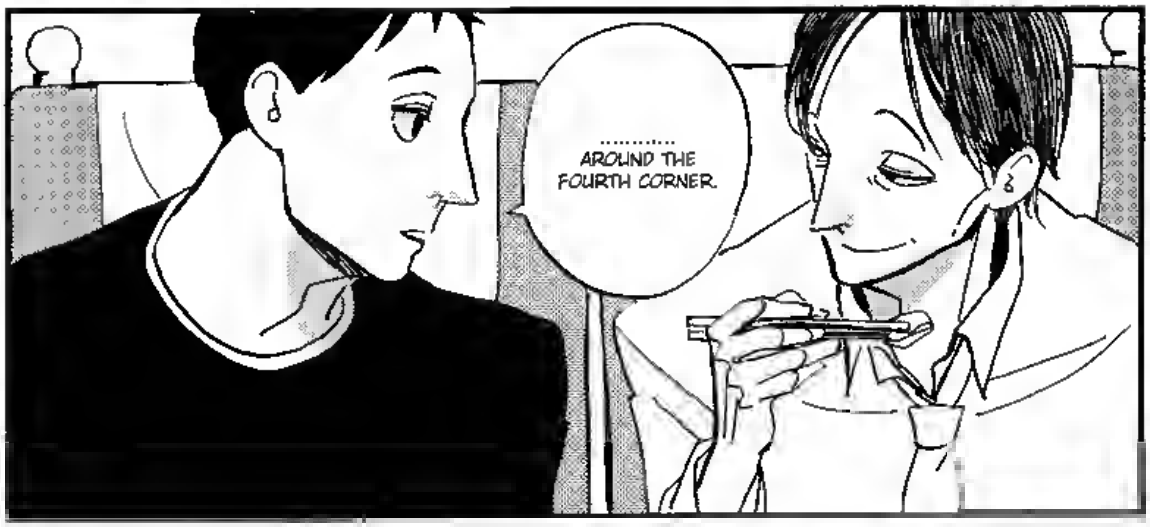
THESE ARE ALL GOOD.
THANKS FOR SHOWING IT TO ME.
What a nice guy

I USED TO GO TO THE RACE-COURSE BACK IN THE OLD DAYS.
WHEN DID YOU GO?
WHEN I WAS IN MY 20S.
THOSE WERE GOOD TIMES.
IT HAD PLENTY OF HORSES I WISHED I COULD'VE SEEN IN THE FLESH.
IT'S ABOUT TIME FOR THE ARIMA KINEN GRAND PRIX, RIGHT?
I just ask for betting tickets
THE EARLY 90S, I THINK.
I OFTEN SEE IT ON TV ADS, BUT THE AMBIANCE OF THE RACECOURSE HAS CHANGED A LOT, HASN'T IT?
THEY DO GOURMET EVENTS AND STUFF.
OR SHOWCASING DIFFERENT LOCAL DRINKS.
OH?
ALSO, A LOT OF GOING ON PICNICS WITH KIDS.
WOULDN'T IT BE NICE TO HAVE A DRAFT BEER AT THE RACECOURSE ON A SUNDAY?

AH...!
ERR...
ME--I MEAN- I'M HERE EVERY WEEK... I'M MAINLY IN TOKYO AND NAKAYAMA BUT,
IT WOULD BE GREAT IF WE GET TO MEET AT THE RACECOURSE, RIGHT?
WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO?

WELL, I'M ON A BUSINESS TRIP TO KANSAI ON SUNDAYS.
MAYBE I CAN SEE YOU IF I TAKE THE KEIHAN LINE.
HAHA.
HAHAHA!

AND I DO HAVE DAYS WHERE MY WORK FINISHES EARLY.
IT COULD BE NICE TO TRY TO STRETCH MY LEGS FOR A BIT.
WHERE'S YOUR USUAL SPOT?
.....
I'VE BEEN GOING TO KANSAI FOR A WHILE.
I LOVE BEING AT THE HANSHIN AND KYOTO RACE-COURSES!
IS THAT SO?
..No.
WELL, I HOPE I SEE YOU THERE.
In that crowd.....
It sounds unlikely
YEAH.


.....
AROUND THE FOURTH CORNER.

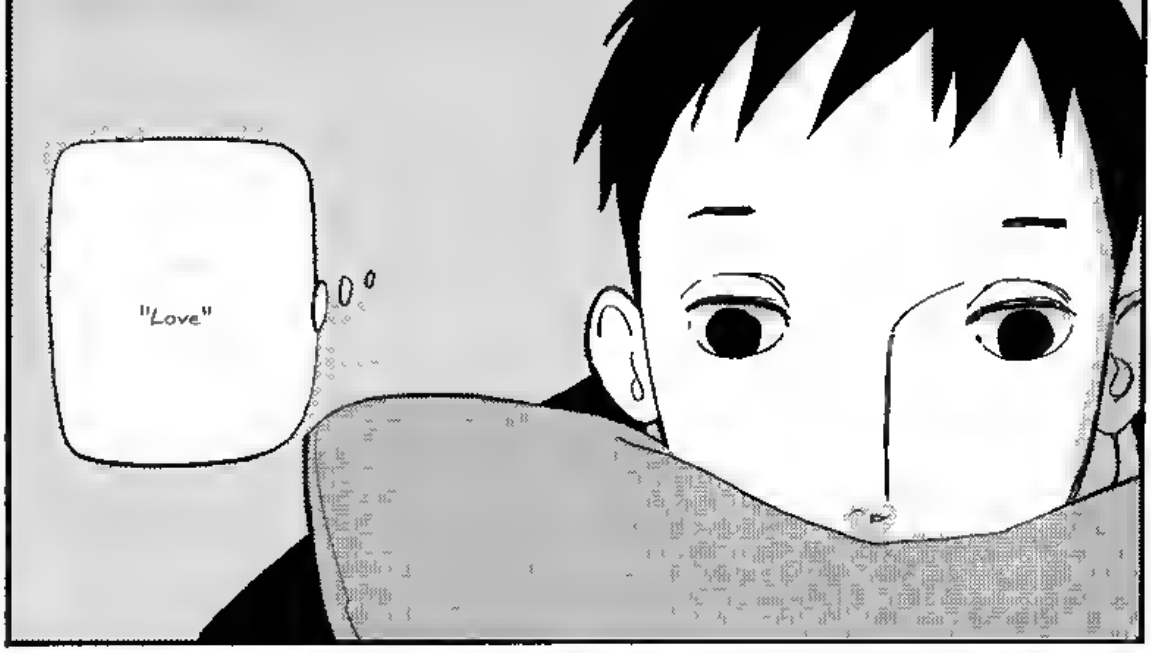
LIKE IN YOUR PICTURES EARLIER, HUH.

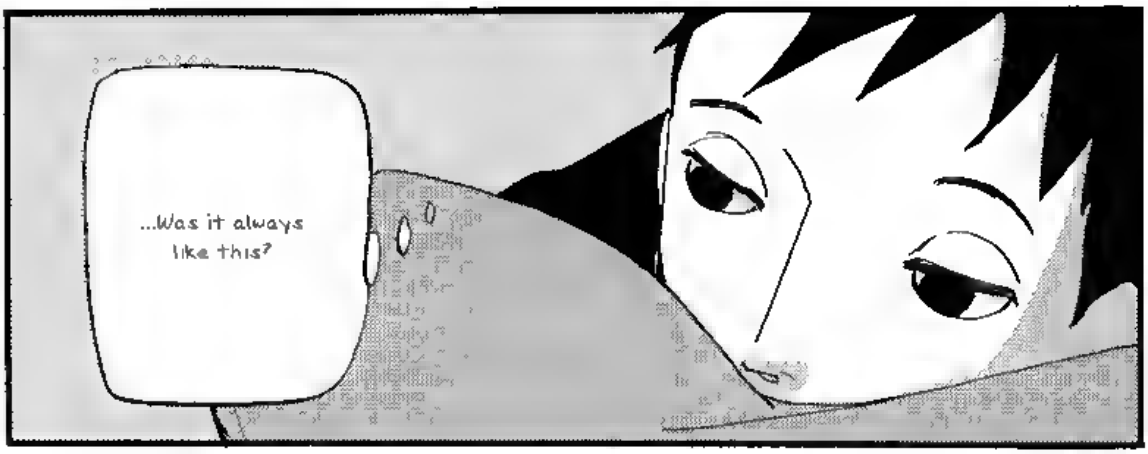
This is.....

FWIP
Savings Target
¥800K
菜
SHUT
slip

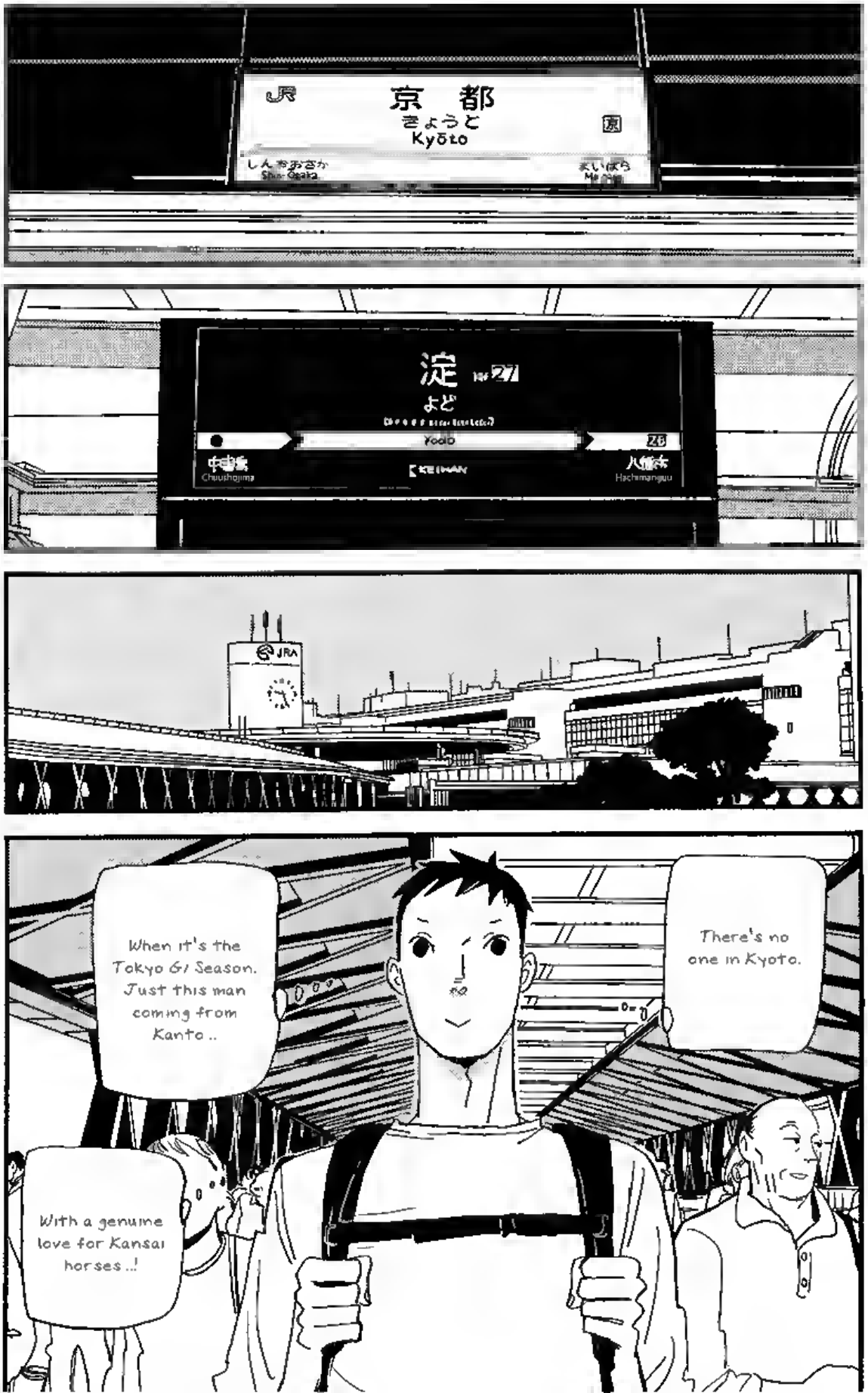
So this is love.
...I can't stop my excitement.

...Whose heart would pound with a mere look.
I was an ordinary guy in high school...


"Love"


...Was it always like this?

.. Being at the racecourse—
And having a draft beer together —

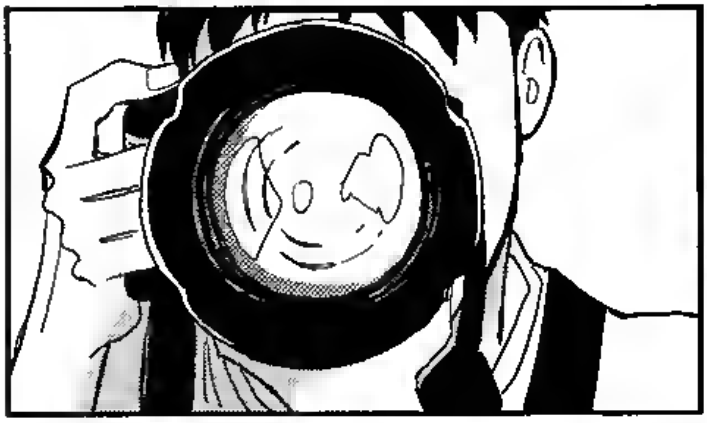

京都
きょうと
Kyōto
淀
よど
Yodo
Chuushojima
Hachimanguu
JRA
There's no one in Kyoto.
When it's the Tokyo G1 Season. Just this man coming from Kanto..
With a genuine love for Kansai horses..!

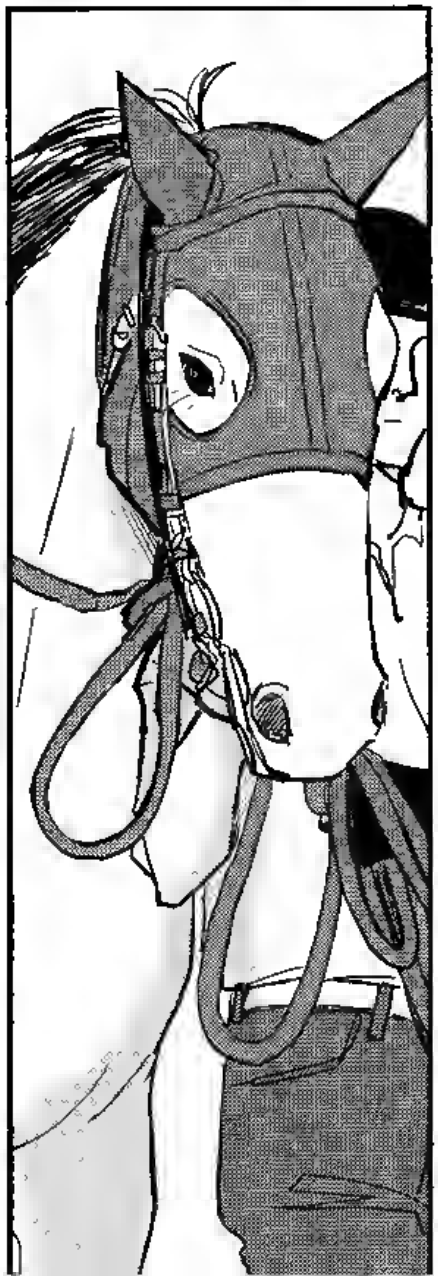
This no-stakes racecourse will be a training paradise
Ah
It looks like there are fewer people than usual.
They're all shooting from Tokyo
But with nefarious intentions...
RACING PROGRAM

Two of the horses I'm followin- are racing today, too...
Sooo happy.
I've been getting more favorites from the new 3-year-old horses in the Kansai Circuit.

.. After which,

KYOTO
That guy's work will finish early and ..
He'll really be here to stretch his legs out and .
If I get to meet him it'll be the best Sunday ever



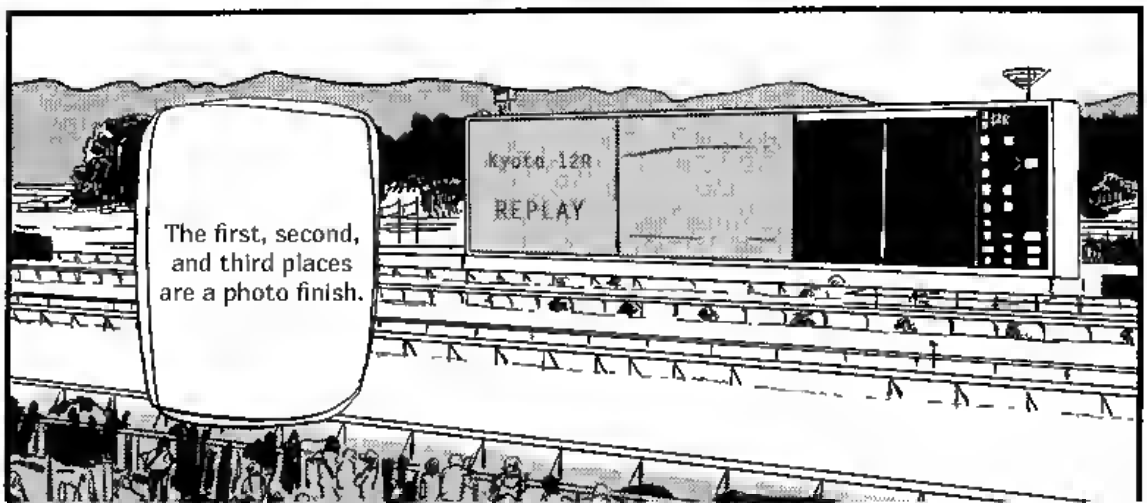


4R
Final
1 10
2 7
3 13
4 3
5 6
Nose
3/4
Neck
Neck
Turf
Good
Time 1.09.4
Dirt 4F 46.1
Good 3F 34.8

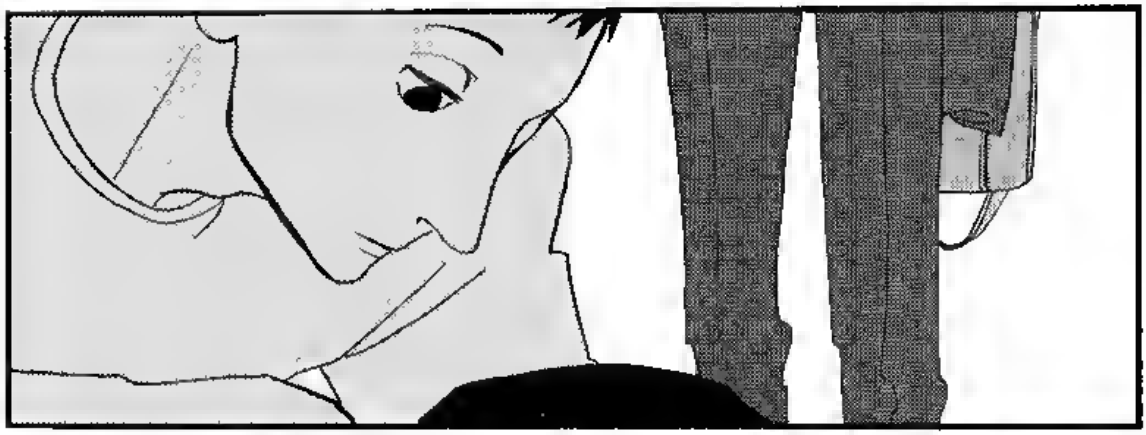
looks around
...
Assuming he came, it'll be too late in the day
Kyoto 7R Final
11R Final
The final post parade for race twelve has started.

I can come next week, or the week after.

There's him working until evening
There's the thing where he falls asleep the minute he sits down


The first, second, and third places are a photo finish.
Kyoto 12R
REPLAY

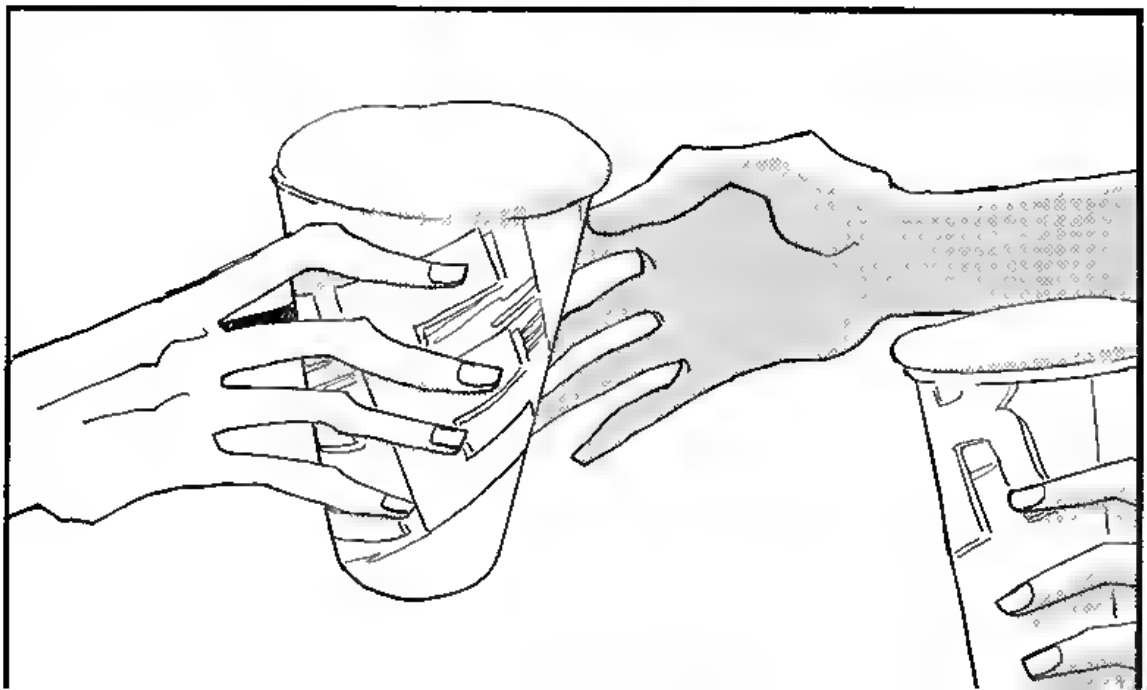
I'll just sit here and relax, like usual.
Commute back...
Buy some rice balls...
Maybe we'll get together on the way home
Please do not dispose of your winning ticket until an official order of placing is confirmed.



THERE IT IS.

YOUR USUAL SPOT.

I GOT HERE JUST BEFORE THE FINAL RACE.
I WAS WATCHING NEAR THE GOAL BOARD.
THAT'S GOOD TO HEAR...
I DIDN'T GET TO BUY A BETTING TICKET, THOUGH.
...I'LL GO BUY US A BEER!
OH, YOU DON'T HAVE TO.
I INSIST!
PLEASE KEEP AN EYE ON MY CAMERA!

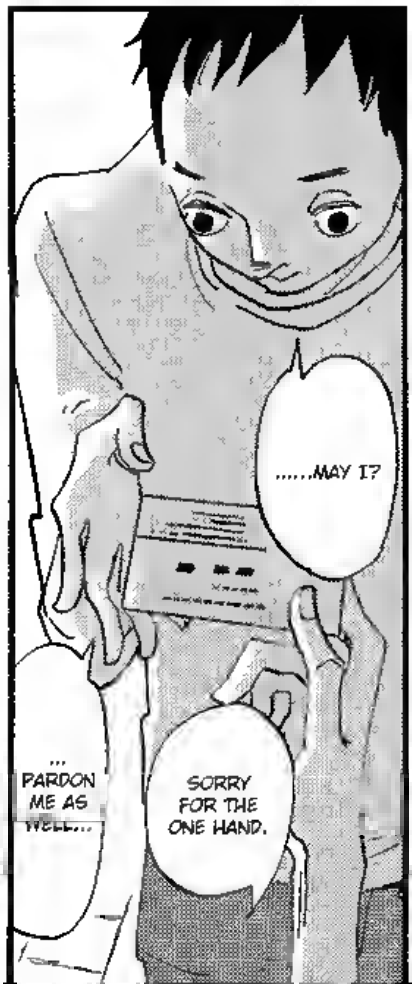


I'M GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT.
DID YOU GET ANY GOOD SHOTS?
I DID!
THERE ARE FEWER PHOTOGRAPHERS THAN USUAL TODAY...
BECAUSE OF THE TOKYO G1 SEASON, RIGHT?
SO GOOD!
IT'S BEEN A HOT DAY, ISN'T IT?
...We're having a beer together
At the race-course!
HAA... THIS IS GOOD.
I'M SO GLAD I CAME.

I'M STILL MID-PRACTICE.
I CAN GET SHOTS FROM THE FRONT ROW WITH FEWER PEOPLE.
ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO STAY HERE?
NO STAKEOUT SPOT?
DON'T YOU HOLD A SEAT?
FOR HAVING A CAMERA.
I DON'T.
I DON'T EVEN BRING ANYONE...
SO I SQUEEZE MYSELF INTO THE GAP BETWEEN THE SEATS.
MAKE MYSELF SMALLER...
YOU CAN'T MOVE FOR SEVERAL ROUNDS WHEN YOU'RE IN FRONT, LIKE WHEN YOU'RE IN A HIGH-STAKES RACE.
AND IN SUMMER, IT'S TERRIBLE.
YOU'RE A DEDICATED MAN, HUH.
HUH...
REALLY?
HAHA
A FINE YOUNG MAN.

I REALIZED THIS WHILE HEADING HERE BUT WE HAVEN'T EXCHANGED NAMES.
Oh, man

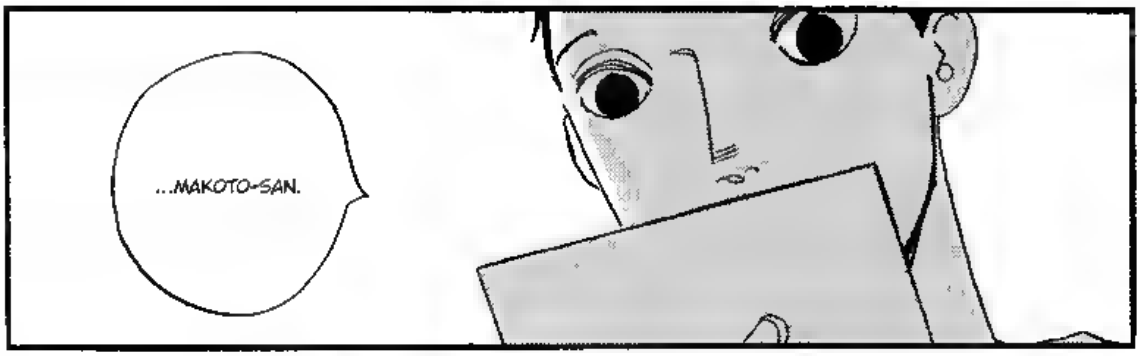
SO HOW ABOUT IT?


.....MAY I?
... PARDON ME AS WELL...
SORRY FOR THE ONE HAND.

IS CALLED KINOSHITA.
Makoto Kinoshita

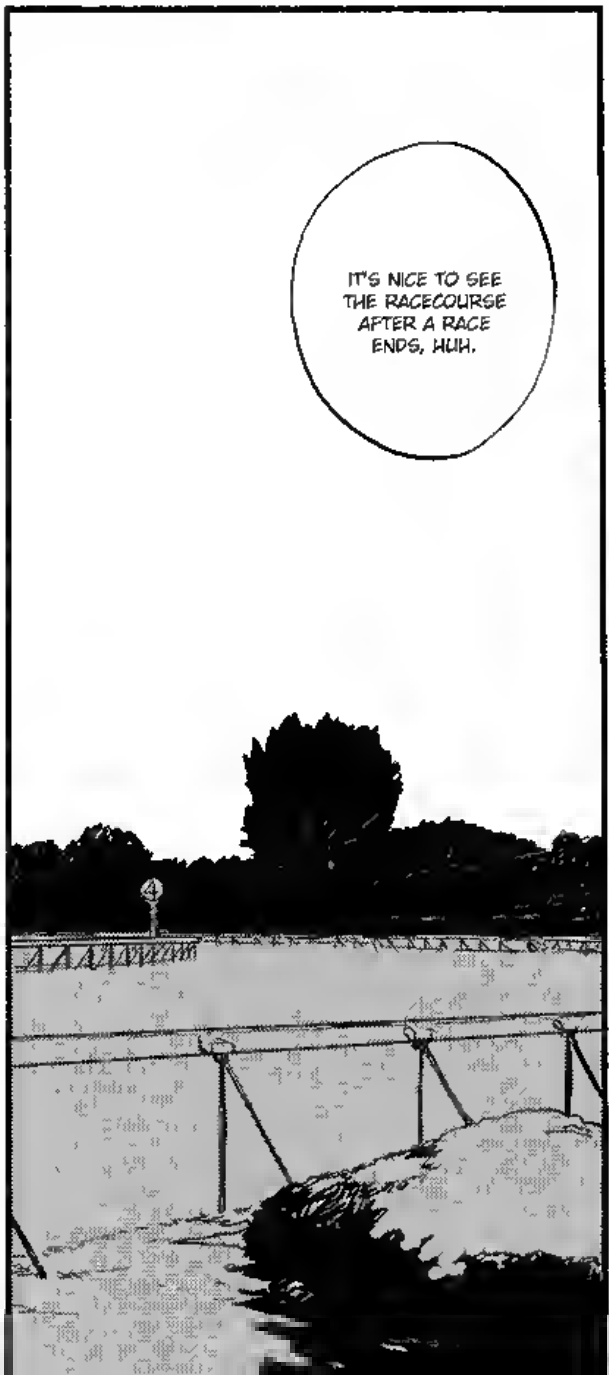
IT'S... IT'S HAYAMA.
HAYAMA-KUN, HUH?
Tohru Hayama.
THIS OLD MAN...
He just called himself an old man!

I SELL GOODS LIKE FUTONS SO IF YOU EVER NEED ONE, TELL ME.
I'LL GIVE YOU A GOOD PRICE.
Makoto Kinoshita
IT'S PROOF THAT I'M NOT A SUSPICIOUS OLD MAN.
HAHA
THAT DIDN'T EVEN CROSS MY MIND!


...MAKOTO-SAN.

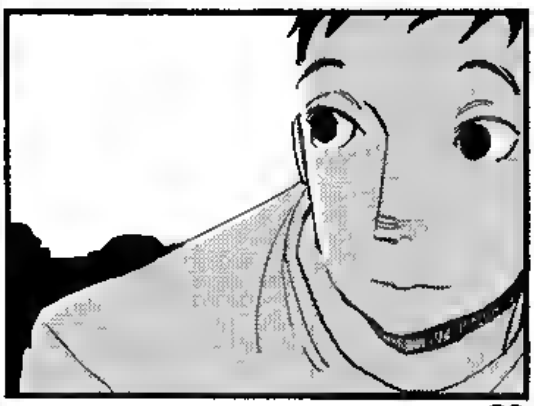
TOHRU.
A HORSE NAMED MAKOTO RAN TODAY!
Waaaaah!
OH, YEAH. MAKOTO SOMETHING.

I DON'T THINK I'VE HEARD OF IT.
There was a Tohru something
WASN'T THERE A HORSE WITH THAT NAME?
Oh my goooooood!

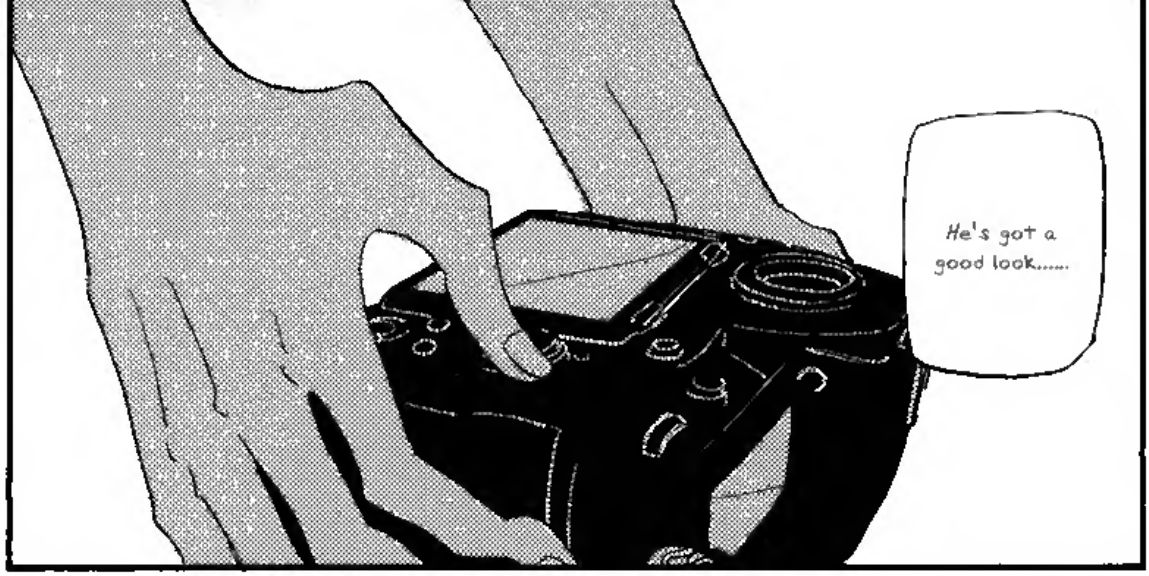

IT'S NICE TO SEE THE RACECOURSE AFTER A RACE ENDS, HUH.

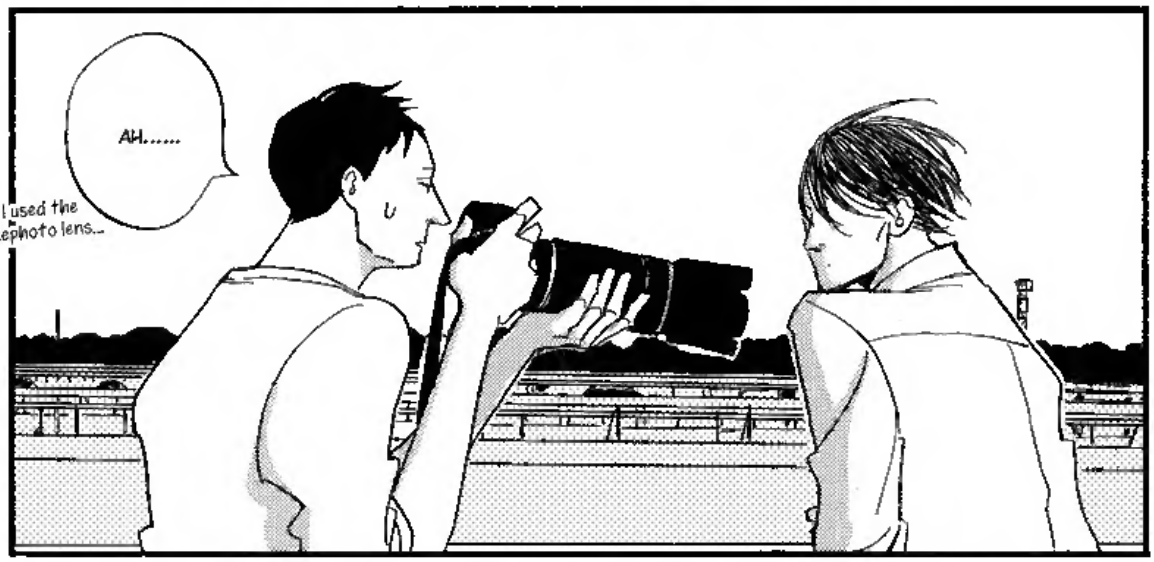
Wah!
IF I CAN CALL YOU TOHRU-KUN,

THEN YOU CAN CALL ME MAKOTO-SAN.



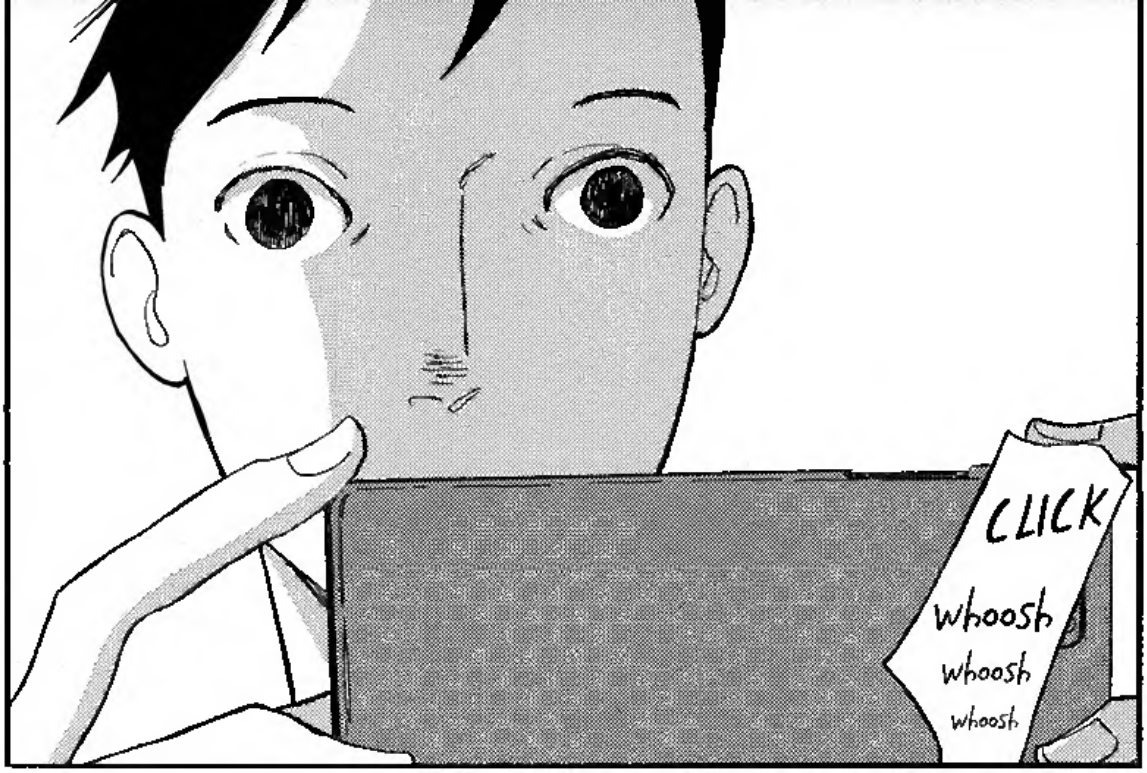
AAHHH, THE WIND IS NICE.
THIS MAY BE THE FIRST TIME I'M TAKING IT SLOW LIKE THIS.
I'M ALWAYS FALLING IN LINE TO MAKE MONEY RIGHT AWAY.


He's got a good look.....


AH.....
I used the telephoto lens...

AN OLD MAN WHO JUST GOT OFF OF WORK WITH A BEER AND THE RACECOURSE.
HAHA!
.....
?
YOU HAD A NICE LOOK ON YOU... LOOKED LIKE I COULD TAKE A GOOD PHOTO OF YOU OVERLAPPING THE COURSE...
THEN I USED THE TELEPHOTO LENS.

SAME TAKE?
...I'll retry with my phone.
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...


CLICK
whoosh
whoosh
whoosh

Waaaaaah
I DIDN'T MEAN TO!
HAHA
BURST MODE?
FORCE OF HABIT WHEN SHOOTING HORSES.....
SO EM-BARRASSING!
HAHAHA!